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REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND ON THE WORK OF ITS SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF 1996

(9-12 April 1996)*

* The present document is a mimeographed version of the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on its second regular session (9-12 April 1996). The reports on the first regular session (22-25 January), annual session (17-21 June) and third regular session (16-20 September) will be issued as parts I, III and IV, respectively. The reports will be combined and issued in final form as Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 12 (E/1996/32/Rev.1-E/ICEF/1996/12/Rev.1).

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CONTENTS

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
I.	ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION	1 - 5	4
	A. Statements by the President and the Executive Director	1 - 2	4
	B. Adoption of the agenda	3 - 5	4
II.	DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD	6 - 153	6
	A. Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews	6 - 67	6
	B. Mid-term country programme reviews and evaluations	68 - 75	16
	C. Budgetary matters	76 - 108	17
	D. Progress report on the management excellence programme	109 - 116	22
	E. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council/ follow-up to the triennial policy review on operational activities for development	117 - 123	23
	F. 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award	124 - 125	24
	G. Other matters	126 - 151	25
	H. Concluding remarks	152 - 153	29
III.	DECISIONS ADOPTED		30
	1996/7. Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews		30
	1996/8. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council		31
	1996/9. 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award		31
	1996/10. Headquarters and regional offices budget for the biennium 1996-1997		32
	1996/11. Headquarters and regional offices budget for the biennium 1996-1997		33
	1996/12. General resources programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997		33
	1996/13. Supplementary-funded programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997		34
	1996/14. Additional allocation for the administrative and programme support budget for field offices		34
	1996/15. UNICEF communication and information programme		35
	1996/16. Harmonization of budget presentations		35

CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter		Page
1996/17.	Extension of cooperation with Rotary International for polio eradication and extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative	36
1996/18.	Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the operations of the United Nations Children's Fund	37
1996/19.	Election of Executive Board representatives to the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy	37
1996/20.	Dates of Executive Board sessions	37

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Statements by the President and the Executive Director

1. The President, citing the ongoing reform of the United Nations system, said that UNICEF, led by the Executive Director, continued to fight for the survival, protection and development of children and for the rights of the child. He referred to the Executive Director's statement at the recent launch of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa, in which she stressed that UNICEF would work in the areas of primary health care, basic education, water supply and sanitation, and the protection and rehabilitation of children affected by war. These were the areas in which UNICEF had a comparative advantage, and other United Nations agencies would work in their own areas. He expressed the hope that the Special Initiative would become an example of the effectiveness of international cooperation through the United Nations system.

2. The Executive Director said that she recently had visited the Middle East, the Russian Federation and Central Asia. During these travels, she had been struck by four things: the wisdom and effectiveness of the country programme approach because it gave UNICEF the flexibility to respond to a fast-changing world; the magnitude of the challenges still facing children; the determination of Governments to tackle those changes; and the quality of UNICEF staff. She added that she had visited most of the industrialized nations as well and was gratified to confirm that support for UNICEF remained strong. However, it was clear that no one could take that support for granted, and UNICEF must continue to justify it on the basis of results achieved for children and the efficiency with which they were achieved.

B. Adoption of the agenda

3. The agenda of the session, as contained in document E/ICEF/1996/9, was adopted. The agenda contained the following items:

Item 1: Opening of the session: statements by the President and the Executive Director

Item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work

Item 3: Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews:

(a) Africa

(i) Eastern and Southern Africa

(b) Americas and the Caribbean

(c) Asia

(i) East Asia and the Pacific

(ii) South Asia

(d) Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Baltic States (including a report on the UNICEF approach to the region)

(e) Middle East and North Africa

Item 4: Mid-term country programme reviews and evaluations

Item 5: Budgetary matters:

(a) Integrated budget for headquarters and regional offices for 1996-1997

(b) Harmonization of budget presentations

Item 6: Progress report on the management excellence programme (MEP)

Item 7: Annual report to the Economic and Social Council (part II of the report of the Executive Director)

Item 8: Follow-up to the triennial policy review on operational activities for development

Item 9: 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

Item 10: Other matters

Item 11: Concluding remarks by the Executive Director and the President

4. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex of the Rules of Procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced the observer delegations that had submitted credentials for he session and had advised the secretariat of the agenda items in which they had a special interest. They were (with the agenda items indicated, if any, shown in parentheses): Albania; Algeria; Armenia (3 (d), 5 (a), 8); Australia; Austria (3, 5); Bangladesh (all); Belarus; Belgium; Benin; Bolivia; Bosnia and Herzegovina (3); Bulgaria; Colombia; Costa Rica; Czech Republic; Egypt; Eritrea; Finland; Georgia (3 (d); Germany (all); Guatemala (all); Guinea; Guyana; Holy See (all); Honduras; Israel; Kazakstan (all); Kyrgyzstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Latvia (all); Lesotho; Lithuania; Malta (all); Mexico (3); Nepal (all); New Zealand; Nicaragua; Niger; Nigeria (5); Panama; Peru (3 (b); Philippines; Poland; Republic of Moldova; Slovakia; Spain; Swaziland; Syrian Arab Republic; The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Tunisia; Turkmenistan; United Republic of Tanzania; Yemen; and Zimbabwe.

5. In addition, Palestine (3 (e)) and the League of Arab States had submitted credentials, as had the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the World Food Programme; the World Health Organization (WHO); the Standing Group of the National Committees for UNICEF (5, 6, 10); the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF (3); Association mondiale des amis de l'enfance (World Association of Children's Friends) (1, 2, 3, 4); International Council on Social Welfare (all); International Federation of Social Workers (3, 6); Mouvement mondial des mères (World Movement of Mothers) (3, 4); Organisation mondiale pour l'éducation préscolaire (World Organization for Early Childhood Education) (1, 3, 6, 7); Rotary International (1, 3, 6, 7, 10); and Soroptimist International (all).

II. DELIBERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews

Africa

Country programme recommendations

6. The Executive Board had before it a recommendation for additional general resources for the Zambia country programme (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.44) and a "stand-alone" supplementary funding proposal for HIV/AIDS-related activities in Eastern and Southern Africa (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.45), both introduced by the Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa.

7. Several delegations commended the role of UNICEF in Zambia, especially in the area of girls' education. One speaker said that the Zambia programme focused on key interventions and was exemplary for its collaboration with bilateral donors. The speaker asked why the programme required more funds if it was so successful that it had expanded. Other delegations cited the programme's model experience in the coordination of child survival and development (CSD) efforts. Speakers expressed concern over falling resource levels and the resulting negative impact on programmes for children. A delegation stressed the need to review this tendency towards budget and staffing reductions in Africa in view of the implications for CSD. UNICEF was urged to pay greater attention to child survival priorities as well as to continuing its efforts in the areas of advocacy, CSD, basic education and grass-roots community development work. The Regional Director said that in 1995, UNICEF spent some 36 per cent of its resources on Africa and was continuing to focus resources on priority programmes.

8. A delegation asked if the request for additional general resources was in support of already approved programmes. The same speaker raised questions about table 2 of the "round-up" document (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43 and Corr.1) and asked if the 7 per cent allocated for programme support was in addition to the programme support budget presented separately. The Regional Director said that UNICEF, through the integrated budget system, was taking steps to address the issue of programme support costs and programme allocations and hoped in future to avoid this problem.

9. Other delegations expressed concerns about supplementary funding allocations and requested further discussions at a future session on the criteria for the allocation of resources. Delegations also suggested that the criteria for the allocation of general resources be adjusted. The Executive Director agreed that there was a need to address issues of resource allocations and a need for increased contributions to general resources, and said that this would be discussed at the Board's third regular session in September.

10. Many delegations expressed support for the HIV/AIDS proposal and stressed the importance of UNICEF coordination with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Delegations also praised the important role UNICEF is playing in the health sector in general and its good coordination with bilateral donors. Other speakers stressed the importance of the proposal, especially its emphasis on maternal health, safe motherhood and HIV/AIDS. A speaker emphasized the crucial importance of preventive education and communication based on the concept of role models, which UNICEF promoted most effectively. It also was stated that the UNICEF education programme must be well coordinated as part of overall Government efforts in this sector and called for improvements in this area. The Executive Director stated that UNICEF takes its relationship with UNAIDS very seriously and cited a number of examples of cooperation, including joint visits to programmes and secondment by UNICEF of staff to and from UNAIDS.

11. Two speakers questioned the validity of the suggestion in the proposal that no regional role is envisaged for UNAIDS, which they said had just started work and was expected to become stronger. Other delegations raised questions about paragraph 17 of the document on regional and national approaches and UNAIDS, while another stressed the importance of the UNICEF comparative advantage, which in this case would involve a focus at the country level. One delegation said that the proposal provided good background and a sound regional approach which should be complemented by country based-initiatives. It also was suggested that a regional-level should focus on the development of national policies. The Regional Director said that UNICEF was committed to coordination at all levels.

12. A speaker said that the proposal concentrated too much on the situation analysis and that there should be a more strategic document focusing on actual activities. A speaker suggested that the programme should emphasize regional support to national programmes, as reflected in UNICEF country programmes, with a broader link to UNAIDS. One delegation from a donor country said that the proposal could have been more specific and cited the example of an HIV/AIDS communication project in Nicaragua; there had been a lack of cooperation with donors and a lack of reporting on the first phase of the project.

13. A number of speakers referred to work in specific countries in the region. One delegation commended ongoing work in South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia on mobilization for HIV/AIDS prevention and asked if the proposal was related to similar programmes in the region. The speaker also requested further information on proposed strategies for behavioural changes. The Regional Director replied that UNICEF was committed to developing innovative strategies for behavioural change in respect of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. She cited the communication project focusing on an animated character called "Sara", which was modeled on the successful "Meena" project developed in South Asia. Another delegation stated that in Uganda, UNAIDS was already playing a lead role in HIV/AIDS programming. A speaker addressed the magnitude of AIDS in Burundi and commended the UNICEF role in that country, which was adapted to the country's specific situation. Speakers asked about UNICEF efforts to support AIDS orphans, and one speaker said that many children with HIV/AIDS have lost both parents, with girls in particular being affected. The Regional Director replied that UNICEF support consisted of identifying and helping to reinforce traditional coping mechanisms instead of attempting to institutionalize children, in addition to efforts to research the needs of child-headed households for better targeting of interventions.

14. A delegation asked why the UNICEF representative in Uganda was the convenor of the HIV/AIDS network for the region and if it would be more appropriate to have the regional office convene the network. The Regional Director said that there was a rotation scheme through which a UNICEF representative from the region was elected patron and convenor of existing regional networks, including the HIV/AIDS network. Another delegation was pleased to see special emphasis on monitoring and evaluation, which needed to be developed as an integral part of programmes, and said that UNICEF should pay more attention to issues of sustainability.

United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa

15. In view of the importance of the recently launched United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa, the Executive Board decided to have a brief discussion on the subject. Mr. Stephen Lewis, Deputy Executive Director, opened the discussion by stating that UNICEF programmes and activities would differ from country to country and would require full endorsement and participation by assisted Governments. He said that the programme process for the Initiative should not differ too much from the existing approval process for country programmes of cooperation and that UNICEF should be able to meet the resource requirements for the Initiative through its traditional fund-raising

mechanisms. Assisted Governments, in turn, would need to embark on vigorous social sector reform and create the right macroeconomic policy environment for programmes to start up and be successful.

16. Many delegations expressed support for the Initiative. Several speakers said that the Initiative should be seen as a strong and renewed commitment to Africa and also underlined the importance of delineating clear roles and responsibilities for the United Nations. Issues of coordination and comparative advantage were seen as crucial.

17. Some delegations asked about the role of the international financial institutions and said that they hoped conditions would not be attached to resource allocations. Delegations said that the negative impact of structural adjustment programmes on already heavily indebted African countries could compromise the objectives of Initiative and asked that this subject be reviewed.

18. Speakers raised a number of questions about the role and input of UNICEF to the Initiative. Speakers cited the relationship with the Bamako Initiative, the mobilization of resources and collaboration with the international financial institutions with regard to health and education programmes as important issues. Several delegations suggested that the Executive Board should be provided with annual reports on the role of UNICEF in the Initiative. Other speakers asked for clarification on how financial resources for the Initiative were to be channelled and on the role of UNICEF in the Initiative. Delegations also asked how priority countries would be selected. A speaker cautioned against a perceived tendency towards the preferential allocation of resources to technical support functions.

19. The Deputy Executive Director said that he shared some of the scepticism, but also shared the view that the Initiative represents a renewed commitment to Africa. For example, several major donors already were committed to funding programmes in support of education for girls.

Americas and the Caribbean

20. The Executive Board had before it three full country programme recommendations (CPRs), for Honduras (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.46), Mexico (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.47) and Peru (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.49); one short-duration country programme for Venezuela (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.50); and one recommendation for additional general resources to fund an already approved country programme for Nicaragua (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.48), which were introduced by the Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean.

21. One delegation said that in general, the recommendations from the region should refer more to UNICEF collaboration with UNDP and UNFPA. The programmes would be stronger if they had more measurable indicators and clearer explanations of the transition from the previous country programmes to the new ones. The speaker welcomed the attention paid to children in especially difficult circumstances, but said that more emphasis should be placed on the situation of indigenous populations. The Regional Director replied that the setting of programme objectives was an area in which the region's field offices were making progress; performance indicators were discussed in the respective master plans of operations, which were far more extensive that the CPRs. She added that indigenous groups were a priority concern, often expressed through the choice of geographic areas targeted by UNICEF, including urban areas.

22. A number of delegations said that the programme for Honduras seemed quite ambitious; they recommended a sharper focus on priority interventions and increased coordination with other United Nations agencies and other donors so that the limited resources of UNICEF will not be dispersed too broadly. Several delegations commented positively on the increased emphasis given to maternal mortality reduction, HIV/AIDS and child rights, and one delegation queried the amounts of resources allocated for these concerns. A number of delegations

endorsed the increased emphasis given to decentralization and capacity-building to improve the quality of services in rural areas. In referring to the water and sanitation programme, one delegation asked whether the coherence of Government policy and inter-agency coordination was still an issue, while another delegation referred to the positive evaluation of this programme and welcomed continued UNICEF support. The Regional Director replied that a coordination mechanism was now in place. Another delegation highlighted the positive role of the UNICEF office in Honduras and referred in particular to the work of UNICEF with children in high-risk urban areas.

23. One delegation stated that the CPR for Mexico was too vague on the issue of inter-agency coordination and that a strong mechanism for such coordination would be needed. In view of the federal structure of the Government in Mexico, the delegation asked about the prospects for legislative implementation of the terms of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. One speaker said that the role of UNICEF in Mexico is increasingly one of mobilizing resources in favour of children within the country and that UNICEF had helped the Mexican public to increase its respect for children's needs and rights. The Regional Director replied that many countries in the region had made progress in ensuring conformity of national laws with the Convention, and in the case of Mexico, because of the federal structure of the Government, work needed to proceed on a state-by-state basis.

24. The Regional Director replied that the Regional Management Team (composed of all country representatives) would be meeting with UNFPA on the issue of HIV/AIDS and reproductive health strategies for the region in the very near future. In addition, country-level mechanisms for the operation of UNAIDS were under development. She added that the concerns about the dispersion of activities and inter-agency coordination mechanisms would be shared with the relevant field offices.

25. Regarding the recommendation for increased general resources for Nicaragua, a speaker asked if the activities described in paragraph 6 of the recommendation (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.48) would be subject to approval of the Code for Children still currently under discussion in the country. While noting that the proposed programme fit well with national priorities, one delegation mentioned the risk of too broad a focus and dispersion of UNICEF assistance, and stressed the need for further coordination with other United Nations agencies and donors.

26. A delegation stated that UNICEF cooperation and coordination in Peru were satisfactory, but that increased information was needed on the nutritional status of children under the age of three years and on water and sanitation. The combined water and sanitation strategy was strongly endorsed by another delegation. A third delegation said that the CPR presented a clear explanation of inter-agency coordination and lessons learned, and that the strategy mix for the programme was appropriate.

27. The relevance and appropriateness of the bridging programme for Venezuela was explained and endorsed by one delegation. A second delegation called attention to the relatively high percentage (39 per cent) of funding devoted to programme support. The Regional Director replied that because of the liaison status of the country office, there was no administrative budget, and some of the programme support costs were for technical support.

Asia

28. The Executive Board had before it one full CPR for Cambodia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.51), and two recommendations for short-duration country programmes, for India (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.52) and Pakistan (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.53), which were introduced by the Regional Directors for East Asia and the Pacific and for South Asia, respectively.

29. Several delegations welcomed the shift in emphasis proposed in the Cambodia CPR and expressed support for its goal-oriented, community-based and participatory approach. Speakers also commented on the active participation of donors and United Nations agencies in the programme preparation process. The involvement of the Government in defining the shift in emphasis was seen as very positive. A delegation emphasized the importance of the HIV/AIDS programme and asked about the capacity of communities to finance services. The Regional Director said that efforts were being made to coordinate with UNAIDS in relation to the Mekong HIV Initiative, which was just starting. Communities already were paying for services that, unfortunately, were of very low quality. Efforts would be made to improve the quality and accessibility of services by using a "value for money" approach, stressing economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

30. A number of delegations asked about the high level of supplementary funding compared to the level of general resources, raising questions on the suitability of criteria for proposed levels of supplementary funding. Information was requested regarding the process by which programme adjustments would be made if supplementary funds received were significantly lower than the approved planning levels. The Regional Director responded that donors are interested in funding programmes in Cambodia, as evidenced by the firm pledges already received and the actual availability of $8.5 million annually for the present country programme. In the event of a shortfall in supplementary funds contributions, the number of provinces covered by the "community action for social development programme" would be reduced. A delegation requested clarification about coordination between the UNICEF-supported education programme and support for education provided by the European Union, which the Regional Director promised to provide at a later date.

31. Several delegations welcomed the recommendations for India and Pakistan, referring specifically to such innovative approaches as rights-based strategies. The integrated approach underpinning both programmes was welcomed by several delegations. Speakers said that the programme strategies and proposed budgets were consistent with national priorities. One delegation said that more funding should be allocated to safe motherhood, child survival and nutrition in the India programme. Concerning nutrition, the Regional Director said that there has been a very important strategic shift in South Asia, especially in India. The problem was not the lack of resources for child nutrition, but the need to refocus efforts on the prevention of malnutrition among children up to two years of age. This strategic shift would create a significant improvement in children's nutritional status over the next several years.

32. A number of delegations welcomed the attention given to the reduction of gender disparities, involvement of civil society, convergence of services and empowerment of communities, especially women. One delegation commended the emphasis on flexibility in the India programme so as to better address needs at the district level. Another delegation noted the large supplementary funding requirements for India, but said that more attention needed to be given to compliance with donor reporting requirements. The speaker also stated that not enough attention was being given to safe motherhood; this issue already had been raised during the Board's recent deliberations on the health strategy, in which the programme in India was referred to as an example of the imbalance between the two elements. The delegation hoped that the joint study on women's reproductive health planned by its bilateral aid agency and the UNICEF India office would be a useful support to the programme. Several other delegations also referred to the importance of the child survival and safe motherhood programme. The Regional Director said that there had been a very clear shift in emphasis to strengthen safe motherhood initiatives.

33. One delegation said that more emphasis should be placed on children's education in the India programme, as it was crucial to the success of other programmes. India's social and economic achievements needed to be further encouraged.

34. On the question of resource allocations, one delegation said that in comparison to the large child populations in India and Pakistan, the resources allocated were small. The speaker asked what strategy the Executive Board had adopted to deal with this imbalance between needs and resources. The delegation also asked for an explanation of the figures given in table 3 of the "round-up" paper (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.1 and Corr.1), which indicated $20 million as "adjusted funds".

35. Noting its substantial bilateral programmes of cooperation in both India and Pakistan, another delegation said that the strategic emphasis on child rights was in line with its own emphasis. The empowerment goals of India's convergent community action programme were extremely important even if rather difficult to achieve. It was appropriate that the programme was being implemented on a pilot basis. The delegation noted the mention of "exemplary partnerships" in the education sector in India, but said that there was no mention of bilateral participation, especially in the district primary education programme. The delegation asked about shortcomings of the previous programme referred to in the Pakistan CPR. The Regional Director said that, broadly speaking, these were identified as fragmentation of programmes, lack of ownership of the programme by national authorities and too much emphasis on service delivery.

36. Regarding coordination within the Pakistan programme, delegations of several donor countries referred to positive experiences between UNICEF and donor agencies, but said that there should be closer collaboration in some areas, especially implementation of the social action programme and in health. One delegation asked if UNICEF had the capacity to become involved in the area of health planning and management and said that close collaboration with other partners was essential to avoid overlap.

37. Several delegations referred to monitoring and evaluation issues in both country programmes, with most saying they required more emphasis. Saying that the results of the change in strategies and emphasis in both country programmes needed to be monitored and evaluated effectively, a speaker asked if adequate assessment tools were available to do so. The delegation urged UNICEF to monitor the India programme closely, and suggested that the Board should receive a report on the impact of India's bridging programme. One delegation asked if the proposed emphasis on monitoring by communities would replace traditional monitoring. Several delegations said that the monitoring aspects of the Pakistan programme needed further development, especially indicators for measuring community participation. The Regional Director endorsed the importance of monitoring and evaluation and said that community monitoring and evaluation were meant primarily to support community action. They would not replace national-level monitoring and evaluation, but strengthen that process. One delegation said that in programmes in which several donors were extensively involved, it was important for UNICEF to be able to identify and then evaluate its particular role and contribution.

38. Several delegations referred to the substantial organization and staffing changes that had taken place recently in Pakistan and one delegation said that this had already adversely affected implementation of the ongoing programme. Another speaker asked if the provincial UNICEF field offices in Pakistan were being evaluated for cost-effectiveness. The Regional Director responded that the size of the field offices in Pakistan had been reduced, and there had been some centralization of functions as part of a general review taking place in several countries, including India. UNICEF was constantly evaluating the effectiveness of field offices through the budget review process.

39. One delegation noted the importance of combating child labour in both countries, but said that this topic had not been highlighted adequately in the CPRs. The Regional Director said that child labour was a major concern in both programmes and was being approached in a comprehensive manner, which perhaps was not reflected in the CPR.

40. The representatives of both India and Pakistan thanked delegations for their support and reviewed recent developments in their respective countries.

Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

Country programme recommendations

41. The Executive Board had before it two full CPRs, for Albania (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.54) and Georgia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.57), and four bridging recommendations, for Bosnia and Herzegovina and an area office (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.55), Croatia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.56), The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.58) and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.59). The recommendations were introduced by the Acting Regional Director.

42. On the CPR for Albania, several delegations expressed approval of the increasing trends towards working with international partners, including the World Bank. Two speakers, in particular, welcomed UNICEF collaboration with their bilateral aid programmes in Albania in carrying out health programmes. One of the speakers commended the shift by UNICEF from an emergency approach to a longer-term social sector approach in the new country programme. The representative of Albania expressed appreciation to UNICEF and said that the Government was fully committed to the objectives of the proposed country programme. He asked about the extent of UNICEF assistance in Kosovo because of the plight of Albanians living in the area. The secretariat replied that UNICEF was aware of the needs of the population, particularly the health of Albanians in Kosovo, where UNICEF had a small field presence. In addition, the UNICEF programme in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia specifically targeted Kosovo for acute respiratory infections and diarrhoeal diseases, and was attempting to expand immunization coverage. UNICEF also was providing assistance to ease the shortage of educational materials.

43. One delegation said that the priorities of the Georgia programme would help to meet the needs of the country, although the problem of refugees could have been further elaborated upon, as could the nature and extent of cooperation with other agencies. Another speaker supported the priority given to immunization and encouraged the development of a plan for self-sufficiency in vaccines, in cooperation with other donors. The secretariat replied that UNICEF collaborated closely with such partners as the World Bank, UNDP, the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs, WHO and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Consultations also took place with such major donors as the European Union and the United States Agency for International Development, and the German and United Kingdom Committees for UNICEF. In addition, close contacts existed with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Médecins sans frontières (Doctors without Borders) of France, the Netherlands and Spain; Save the Children; and the Norwegian Refugee Council. A plan for vaccine self-sufficiency was an important but complicated undertaking in which the time factor must be considered carefully so that the plan could be realistically achieved.

44. Most delegations commented positively on the CPRs and programme approaches for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, particularly the focus on local capacity-building. Several speakers also paid tribute to UNICEF and its staff for work often accomplished under extremely difficult circumstances.

45. A delegation expressed some concern and requested clarification about the planned budget for programme support costs in the CPR for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several delegations stated that the amount of UNICEF resources appeared rather small in comparison to the ambitious programme objectives and suggested that they be refocused for clearer, achievable objectives so as to increase both the impact of the programmes and their visibility. The

secretariat replied that costs for the area office in Sarajevo were in addition to general resources earmarked for the country programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The budget for the area office ($1 million per year) previously had been added to the Croatia programme because the office had been located in Zagreb. Because the area operation had been transferred from Zagreb to Sarajevo, programme support costs for the area office now were added to the CPR for Bosnia and Herzegovina. This in no way reduced programme funds (approximately $750,000 per year) for the country programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to the amounts stated in the CPR, some $8 million from inter-agency emergency appeals, if fully funded, also would be available for this country. Hopefully, the supplementary-funded component would receive sufficient donor contributions.

46. Several delegations emphasized the need for very close coordination in the area of education with such major partners as the World Bank and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It was stated that UNICEF should concentrate on its comparative advantages in the region. The good relations between UNICEF and UNHCR were cited as a very positive development. The secretariat replied that while close cooperation with UNESCO was important, this was a relatively new partner and cooperation with UNESCO was limited due to its limited resources. The World Bank had taken a lead role only at end of 1995, after the conclusion of the Dayton Peace Accord.

47. A delegation said that some of the data presented in the CPRs seemed outdated and requested clarification on the source of the data. A speaker requested a comparison between the main social indicators prior to the war and at present. Another delegation said that the link established between emergency and development interventions would be essential in future activities. The secretariat said that UNICEF relied on statistics provided by the United Nations Population Division for population statistics and on UNHCR for figures relating to refugees.

48. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed gratitude to UNICEF for its efforts. The representative of The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia also expressed appreciation to UNICEF. He said that the language in parts of the CPR was inappropriate. His Government's Permanent Mission to the United Nations previously had expressed concern over some statements which, in its opinion, presented an inaccurate picture of the status of minorities in the country and the potential risk of crisis.

49. To a comment that Slovenia was a region requiring the attention of UNICEF, the secretariat said that UNICEF had a small field presence there.

UNICEF approach to Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States

50. The Executive Board had before it a report on the UNICEF approach to Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.61), which was introduced by the Acting Regional Director.

51. The Board had a lengthy exchange of views on the approach paper. Some delegations spoke in favour, while other delegations focused on the difficulties in finding a common denominator for such a diverse group of 27 countries and recommended that the secretariat put more emphasis on subgroup or area approaches.

52. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the excellent analysis and documentation within the paper, which met their expectations. Two delegations said that the report represented the full entry of the region into the UNICEF family, and several delegations thanked the Executive Director for the high priority that she has accorded the region, including several visits to countries in the region.

53. Several delegations commended especially the focus on strengthening civil society as an essential partner in the countries of the region. The deteriorating situation of children and women in many countries of the region, often brought about by the burdens of transition, was noted by several delegations and the UNICEF response seen as appropriate. Several delegations also expressed satisfaction with the report's stress on lessons learned from past UNICEF experience within the region.

54. One delegation asked if the composition of the region made sense and whether a single approach could be used for a region containing such tremendously diverse countries. Several delegation spoke of the report as a general framework which would need to be supplemented by more area-specific strategies addressing the need of discreet groups of countries within the region. In this context, a number of delegations expressed support for the emphasis on a country-based approach to framing programmes within the general strategic approach. Within the overall approach, several delegations also stressed the need for UNICEF to focus on the countries with lower levels of development and countries experiencing emergencies. Two delegations suggested the need to formally categorize countries within the region for the purposes of refining relevant strategies, and one delegation said that UNICEF needed to clarify how it would respond to the mandates contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other conventions and international agreements.

55. Several delegations welcomed the close collaboration with other partners, notably the World Bank and UNDP, citing it as positive follow-up to General Assembly resolutions on coordination within the United Nations system and also as an effective way of ensuring the maximum impact of UNICEF resources.

56. A number of delegations expressed concern about the relationship between UNICEF and the National Committees within the region. One delegation said that this issue was related to part of MEP which was reviewing the relationship with National Committees. Several speakers said that the issue also was related to resource mobilization within the region. It also was stated that the relationship between the new regional office and the existing UNICEF offices which work with National Committees would need to be clarified.

57. Several delegations addressed the subject of resource mobilization for the new region, with one saying that the establishment of the new regional office within the context of a zero growth budget meant that UNICEF resources for developing countries already had been reduced. The latter delegation and several others stressed the need for innovative fund-raising strategies, including local fund-raising and partnerships with other organizations active in these countries. In this way UNICEF programmes and objectives could be supported without increasing the relatively small amount of general resources currently allocated to the region, thus, jeopardizing funding for UNICEF programmes in developing countries. As noted in the report, the substantial resources available in many countries in the region should make such an approach workable. The speaker said that the present reductions in UNICEF headquarters staff, although initially intended to increase resources available for developing countries, actually had not succeeded in doing so partly because of the added expense of the new regional office.

58. All delegations addressing the issue supported the proposed structure of the regional office and the liaison offices proposed for Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. One speaker said that there might be a need to reconsider the role, function and costs of all regional offices within the context of MEP. All speakers supported locating the new regional office in Geneva. One delegation questioned the comparison of the number of staff proposed for the new regional office with that of other regional offices. A speaker requested clarification about the nature and structure of the proposed liaison offices and another asked about the "hierarchy" of offices, from country office to area office to regional office.

59. A delegation, supported many others, expressed concerns because the report was on an "approach" rather than a "strategy", although in fact it was a strategy for the region. Speakers were concerned by the fact that the secretariat had submitted the report only for information and not for a decision by the Executive Board, which usually was the case with a programme strategy.

60. The Acting Regional Director said that UNICEF experience in the region had highlighted the strong linkages between the Russian Federation and the other countries of the CIS, particularly on the procurement of supplies. The proposed liaison office in Moscow, therefore, would greatly facilitate UNICEF activities not only in the Russian Federation, but also in other countries that formerly were part of the Soviet Union. He explained that UNICEF was looking for space in the UNDP offices in Minsk, Belarus, and Kiev, Ukraine, to accommodate the small UNICEF presence there as well as space in the UNHCR office in Moscow. Shared premises and a small team would reduce operational expenses in Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine and also help to ensure coordination with other United Nations agencies. The liaison offices were strategic in so far as they provided on-the-spot monitoring of facilities. UNICEF had received several million dollars in recent years for Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine and would like to implement and track those funds in a responsible way and in the spirit of full accountability. The donor community should be entitled to better feedback and follow-up in these three countries.

61. Regarding the issues raised with respect to National Committees for UNICEF within the region, UNICEF would have to play a stronger role in programme-related activities and make sure that qualified programme staff were available to adequately cover activities carried out in countries with National Committees. Frequent requests for temporary assistance, e.g., for vaccines, clearly demonstrated that there was a need to go beyond the problems identified in the situation analysis and to devise work plans with Governments and National Committees in those countries.

62. The Executive Director said that she welcomed the debate on the nature of the report, which had been provided by the secretariat as background information for the Executive Board for its later consideration of the proposed budgets for the regional and liaison offices. The types of issues on which the Executive Board needed to take decisions and the required supporting documentation were currently under discussion within the framework of MEP and the project team examining relations between the Board and secretariat.

63. On the issue of the composition of the new region, the Executive Director said that there were wide differences between countries in most regions; this should not be the basis for deciding or questioning the countries to be included in this region. The size of staff and budgets should not be compared, given the differing challenges and opportunities facing each region. In response to queries regarding the relationship of country offices to area offices and the regional office, she said that a major aspect of MEP had to do with reducing "hierarchical" structures and reinforcing the centrality of the country programme. She would discourage delegations from concentrating overly on reporting relationships and ask them to continue to provide guidance on programme approaches such as those outlined in the report.

64. As the approach paper was "for information", the Executive Board concluded its discussion without adopting a formal decision.

Middle East and North Africa

65. The Executive Board had before it one recommendation for additional general resources for Lebanon (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.60), which was introduced by the Regional Director.

66. Several delegations complimented Lebanon's efforts and achievements in accelerating the development process during the last year. All speakers

commended and strongly supported the role played by UNICEF in the country's rehabilitation efforts. Another delegation supported the coordination between UNICEF and its partners in the country programme, especially the Government. One delegation spoke of the positive role of UNICEF-supported programmes in the areas of peace education, salt iodization and promotion of child rights. A delegation emphasized that special hardship conditions in the south of the country generated the need for specific programme attention.

67. One speaker, while commending the work of UNICEF, indicated the need for further strengthening of coordination with others at all levels. The delegation also said that the programme's objectives were ambitious in relation to the funds available and, therefore, there should be stronger prioritization within the programme. The Regional Director explained that the current recommendation covered only the year 1996, and the new CPR, to be submitted to the Executive Board at the third regular session, would address those considerations. Another delegation commended the reduction of the supply component in the country programme. (See chap. III, decision 1996/7, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

B. Mid-term country programme reviews and evaluations

68. The Executive Board had before it a summary of mid-term reviews of country programmes (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.42). The mid-term reviews for each region were introduced by the respective Regional Directors.

69. Most delegations expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the secretariat to prepare a summary of the mid-term reviews and the lessons learned from them. Nevertheless, many delegations cited the uneven quality of the analyses and said that there was inadequate analysis of programme achievements and constraints. With few exceptions, the summaries were not sufficiently analytical. Several delegations appreciated the quality of the guidelines on the preparation of mid-term reviews that had been shared with field offices. Several delegations pointed out that the summaries described achievements, but did not compare them to targets or explain what might be needed to accelerate progress.

70. Several delegations called for more information on major evaluations and studies. They appreciated that monitoring and evaluation functions still were not sufficiently developed in many country offices and needed to be strengthened as part of more effective country programming. The secretariat was requested to ensure that future reports provided clear information about how routine monitoring, thematic and sectoral evaluations, studies and general analysis of the socio-economic and political environment have contributed to the reorientation of programmes.

71. Several delegations suggested that mid-term reviews should serve as an opportunity to examine the use and flow of resources, especially the relation between general resources and supplementary funds. A review of the levels of resource mobilization should be a basis for the reorientation of programme activities, and as necessary, the reformulation of the strategy for resource mobilization.

72. One delegation commented favourably on the mid-term review of Guinea-Bissau and noted that it followed the appropriate guidelines. The same delegation pointed out certain inconsistencies between the review of progress of the Rwanda country programme and the results of an international evaluation of the relief operation in Rwanda.

73. Delegations' comments on the mid-term reviews for the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan and Yemen were similar to those made for the other reviews. One delegation said that the summaries for the Middle East and North Africa region were of better quality than those of other regions.

74. On the Bolivia mid-term review, one delegation said that the summary highlighted qualitative rather than quantitative progress in meeting national objectives, and that relatively little was reported on the results of UNICEF inputs per se. It was suggested that a mid-term report should highlight first an analysis of UNICEF support and then its impact.

75. The secretariat agreed that future mid-term review summaries needed to be more systematic, analytical and problem-oriented, taking into account inter alia, lessons learned. The Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific agreed that the mid-term reviews should be used as tools for monitoring. While the process for the preparation of country programmes was well developed, the next phase had to focus on monitoring and evaluation. The country programme for the Lao People's Democratic Republic, for example, had been set up to help the country achieve certain goals. The mid-term review was a genuine reflection of what the UNICEF programme was trying to do to support the country in achieving those goals.

C. Budgetary matters

Integrated budget for headquarters and regional offices for 1996-1997

76. The Executive Board considered the following documents:

(a) Integrated budget for headquarters and regional offices for 1996-1997 (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.5 and Corr.1);

(b) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the integrated budget for UNICEF headquarters and regional offices for the biennium 1996-1997 (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.7).

77. Introducing the documents, the Executive Director said that the integrated budget being presented to the Board was a "no-growth" budget. Within the budget, the secretariat had been able to fund the following specific activities: the Programme Manager System (PROMS) to improve field operations; support for the United Nations Integrated Management Information System; establishment of the regional office for Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States; and accommodate the mandatory salary increases. She expressed her satisfaction at being able to present an integrated budget format for headquarters and regional offices. With the new format, it was possible to see the full cost of a division or an office, information which previously had fragmented from three different funding sources. What previously had been two documents consisting of 351 pages had been prepared in a concise 84-page document.

78. The Executive Director said that the strategy behind the budget was to implement Board policy and take advantage of opportunities for improvement whenever possible. Therefore, no actions were requested in the proposed budget which had not previously been reflected in Executive Board decisions. Any proposed structural changes were to improve operational efficiencies. The budget represented the process of management excellence and did not involve setting or changing policy, but rather was the illustration of opportunities to make UNICEF a more efficient and effective organization.

79. Most delegations expressed appreciation for the secretariat's efforts to present a no-growth budget, which they said reflected an acknowledgement of the current financial climate prevailing in the development community. In addition, new costs, such as those for the establishment of the new regional office, were being met with the same level of financial resources. One delegation expressed concern that the no-growth budget reflected the decline of available resources and would cause the secretariat to spread its resources too thinly. Several delegations said that the informal consultations on the proposed budget had been very useful in providing clarifications on some areas of concern.

80. Some delegations said that the lack of growth in the budget had been achieved mainly through reductions in advocacy and programme development activities, and that staff costs had increased by 3.9 per cent. One delegation said that in the prevailing climate of limited resources, the trend was for increased efficiency through doing "more for less". Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Karin Sham Poo, replied that there was an overall decrease in staff for the organization as a whole; the increase in staff costs was a result of increases in post adjustments and salaries applicable to all United Nations agencies. The reductions in advocacy and programme development activities, which previously had been in the global funds budget, were due to the reclassification of some of those costs, such as consultancies into category 1 or staff costs, and category 2 or general operating costs. She agreed that apart from those reclassifications, there were reductions in those activities since calculated choices had to be made without endangering the essential technical capacity at headquarters and regional offices for maintaining quality and accountability in programmes.

81. One delegation expressed concern that the reduction of costs for research and studies in the regional offices might affect the efficiency of the offices' monitoring activities. The Deputy Executive Director said that the evaluation and monitoring budgets were included in the budgets of country offices and would not affect the organization's evaluation capacity.

82. All delegations welcomed the first stage of the new integrated budget format, saying that they found it to be clear, concise, lucid, informative and more transparent and user-friendly than previous budget presentations. They encouraged the secretariat to continue to develop and improve of the budget format. Some delegations said that integration of the budget involved not only consolidating sources of funds, but also integrating the roles of various structures within the organization.

83. Some delegations concurred with the Advisory Committee's observation that the integrated budget proposal was difficult to follow as it presented only a fragmented view of the operation of UNICEF. They said that the document lacked information on the overall budgetary strategy of UNICEF in the context of its policy orientation, programme focus and operational strategies, particularly in the field. Some delegations said, however, that there was sufficient information on UNICEF policies in the budget document and that the proposed budget should be a presentation of the financial implications of policies. One speaker said that the budget document was not an instrument for introducing new policies. Some delegations said that they look forward to the full presentation of the integrated budget for the 1998-1999 biennium, which would include field offices and headquarters and reg onal offices. Delegations further noted the continued dialogue regarding the integrated budget format for field offices which the Executive Board expected to review prior to the submission of the budget proposal for field offices.

84. Several delegations agreed with the Advisory Committee's recommendation that future budget proposals should identify the total costs of consultants separately. They also agreed with the Advisory Committee about the need to avoid the overuse of consultants in the reform process and stressed the need for full use of in-house expertise. The Deputy Executive Director said that the secretariat would provide the costs of consultants separately in future budget proposals.

85. The proposed restructuring of the health sector of Programme Division, particularly the Bamako Initiative Unit, was viewed with concern by many delegations because of the possible impact on programme activities. Speakers asked for reassurance from the secretariat that the restructuring would not affect the support given to the health sector and to the Bamako Initiative in all countries. The Executive Director stated that in spite of the reductions made, health still remained the single biggest programme sector in UNICEF, with 241 health staff working in country offices. The downsizing did not reflect a

reduced emphasis on health, but was proposed to streamline and strengthen the health section in line with the health strategy approved by the Executive Board at its third regular session in September 1995.

86. One delegation welcomed the proposed strengthening of Programme Division's sections responsible for children in especially difficult circumstances and gender and development. Delegations expressed support for the consolidation of the offices of Planning and Coordination, Evaluation and Research, and Social Policy and Economic Analysis, with the understanding that this would not be at the expense of UNICEF evaluation activities. Delegations stated that although there were no policy changes proposed in the budget, the Executive Board needed to follow-up the structural changes being proposed carefully.

87. Questions were raised by some speakers about the movement of posts from field offices to the regional offices, particularly in Eastern and Southern Africa and in Burkina Faso. Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, said that in the case of Burkina Faso, the posts being transferred to the West and Central Africa Regional Office performed advisory functions which benefited a number of countries in the region and, therefore, the posts would be more efficiently utilized if located in the regional office. The transfer of posts to the Eastern and Southern Africa regional office represented a consolidation of supply, logistics and information resources management functions which were duplicated in several UNICEF offices operating in Nairobi. This operational improvement had been proposed as a result of internal audit observations raised regarding operating efficiency in cases where there are multiple UNICEF offices in one location with separate financial and administrative functions.

88. Delegations supported the establishment of the regional office for Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States and the establishment of liaison offices in Minsk (Belarus), Moscow (Russian Federation) and Kiev (Ukraine). One speaker welcomed the choice of Geneva as the location of the regional office, saying that because of the existing support and expertise currently available in Geneva, resources would be used in a more efficient manner. Some delegations expressed support for the proposed presence in Brussels to liaise with the institutions of the European Union.

89. Concerns were raised by several delegations about the calculation of the overhead ratio. One speaker said that a well-defined understanding of overhead costs should be undertaken within the context of the budget harmonization exercise with other United Nations agencies. Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, replied that the definition of overhead and the calculation of the overhead ratio was currently under discussion. A clearer definition would be presented to the Executive Board in the full context of the final integrated budget, which would include field offices.

90. Most delegations expressed support for the proposed budget. However, speakers requested the secretariat to inform the Executive Board at an early stage of any revisions proposed as a result of the management reform process.

91. It was noted by some delegations that the budget for the Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office should have shown a decrease instead of an increase from 1994-1995 as a result of the reduction in the Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean (SAFLAC). The Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, said that $1 million had been allocated from SAFLAC to the regional office in 1994-1995. If that was taken into account, the revised amount for 1994-1995 in the budget table for the regional office would be $8.3 million; therefore, there was a $0.2 million decrease in the regional office's budget for 1996-1997.

92. Questions on the role of the regional office were raised by many delegations. However, it was recognized that this subject would be addressed as part of MEP.

93. The secretariat concurred with the recommendation made by several delegations and the Advisory Committee to include a table of financial resources in future budget documents.

94. Some delegations noted the increase in cash and supply assistance in the proposed budget. Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, explained that the amount of $5.7 million represented the programme assistance allocation to countries in Central and Eastern Europe, CIS, and the Baltic States which did not have country programmes.

95. One delegation cautioned the secretariat against putting too much emphasis on operational efficiencies which might be at the expense of the quality of programmes. The Executive Director explained that improvements in operational efficiencies were important in the current development aid community. UNICEF needed to be managed efficiently to ensure programme stability and must continue to challenge itself programmatically to be responsive to the needs of women and children.

96. Some delegations expressed concern about the issuance of 200-series contracts for the new posts proposed in the budget, in light of the similar concerns expressed by the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee had recommended that such matters be submitted for review to the International Civil Service Commission and ultimately to the General Assembly. Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, said that the proposal had been made to provide the Executive Director with the maximum flexibility in the establishment of posts, given the voluntary nature of funding for the organization. Discussions on this issue were under way within the United Nations system, the results of which would be submitted to the General Assembly through the Fifth Committee.

97. One delegation requested that the secretariat, in adopting budgetary policies, consider their adaptation to various country or regional situations and said that budget policies need not be uniformly applied to all offices. Several delegations expressed support for the strengthening of the internal audit functions in UNICEF. (See chap. III, decisions 1996/11, 1996/12, 1996/13, 1996/14 and 1996/15, for the texts of the decisions adopted by the Executive Board.)

Harmonization of budget presentations

98. The Comptroller and Director of the Division of Financial Management made an oral report on harmonization of budget presentations. She said that a similar report had been presented to the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA at its second regular session of 1996. She outlined the context of Executive Board decision 1995/37 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1) and UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board decision 1995/30 on budget harmonization, which had led to the presentation of this oral report. She added that internal working documents on the comparison of budget presentations were available to the Executive Board.

99. In summarizing the actions taken to date, the Comptroller stated that in 1995, a detailed comparison of budget presentations, based on the 1994-1995 initial budget estimates of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF, had been completed. The study had revealed that the budget presentations of UNDP and UNFPA were harmonized to a large extent and were in line with the budget presentation of the United Nations. While UNDP initially had based its budget presentation on that of the United Nations, and UNFPA had subsequently revised its budget presentation to harmonize it with that of UNDP and the United Nations, UNICEF had developed its budget presentation independently. The study showed material differences in content, definition of concepts and presentation between the budgets of UNDP and UNFPA on the one hand, and of UNICEF on the other hand.

100. However, during 1994, UNICEF had undertaken a major management review, which among other things, called for UNICEF to adopt an integrated budget approach, entailing fundamental changes in the scope and content of its budget

presentation. The Executive Board had endorsed those recommendations at its third regular session in September 1995 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, decision 1995/30) and agreed that UNICEF initially would present a 1996-1997 budget covering its headquarters and regional offices only, in the new format, to be considered by the Board at its April 1996 session. Thus, the earlier comparison based on the 1994-1995 budget estimates was rendered obsolete.

101. A new comparison based on the 1996-1997 budget estimates for the three organizations could only be undertaken once UNICEF had prepared its 1996-1997 budget for headquarters and regional offices, a document which was finalized in mid-February 1996. Since that time, a preliminary comparison of the three organizations' budgets had been completed. The comparison covered headquarters' activities only. A comparison of field activities would be undertaken in 1997 when UNICEF had prepared its field budget for the first time in the new format. The comparison was based on the proposed budget of UNICEF, which had not yet been approved by the Executive Board.

102. The preliminary comparison indicated that the differences between UNICEF on the one hand, and UNDP and UNFPA on the other, might not have narrowed. The differences concerned not only presentation, but also the scope and content of the budget. Moreover, the inherent differences in the nature of the organizations needed to be taken into consideration. Thus, more work was needed in order to present to the respective Executive Boards a comprehensive picture of the substantive issues involved.

103. With regard to the timing and nature of future reports to the Executive Boards, UNICEF would present another oral progress report at the annual session in June 1996, together with working papers as needed. An account of the debate on the issue also would be reported to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in June 1996. It was noted, however, that the annual session of the Executive Board would not have taken place in time for reporting to the Council session, nor did UNICEF have proposals for the budgets of field offices. Thus, it seemed impractical to have proposals reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in time for the third regular session 1996, to be held in September, as requested by the Executive Board, since the documentation would have to be ready by May 1996. The Comptroller suggested that the presentation of the initial proposals to the Executive Board be made at the first regular session of 1997, rather than at the third regular session of 1996. However, if the Board wished, another oral progress report could be presented at that session.

104. One delegation thanked the secretariat for the report and the work done so far and expressed appreciation for the working papers made available. It was a good starting point to see where harmonization was possible. The delegation, supported by others, stressed that the goal of harmonization of budgets was to make them more similar so as to promote understanding and support good decision-making. The similarities must go beyond content and presentation styles to encompass the underlying principles of the preparation of accounts and estimates. All budget documents must be upgraded, with the recognition that more similarity would not mean sameness and that variances from the harmonization norm should be clearly indicated in the budget documents. The efforts to harmonize budgets must include, firstly, a common definition and usage of budget terms, i.e., the same words must mean the same thing from one budget to the next; and secondly, commonly accepted accounting approaches and policies. The third element should be the disclosure of basic key information, e.g. on the use of funds, a breakdown of overhead costs, programme delivery costs and programme costs, and within these a breakdown of salaries versus operating costs, as well as of Professional and non-Professional staff. There also should be minimum requirements for content such as the same types of table with similar kinds of breakdowns and roll-ups. Lastly, there should be a common presentation style, ideally one budget document that would consolidate the regular budget and extrabudgetary resources and as a minimum, a summary table

which would consolidate the global financial plan of the organization. The harmonization of budgets must lead to simplification, visibility, completeness and comparability.

105. Some delegations expressed great concern over the lack of progress, although they recognized that the secretariat had had a considerable workload in preparing the integrated budget. It was pointed out that the integrated budget ought to have been structured in such a way that it was consistent with the harmonized format. Some delegations said that the progress report on budget harmonization should be discussed during the June 1996 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council. It was suggested that the report to the Council should include whatever progress has been made at that point, and the debate during the April 1996 session should be made part of the report.

106. Concerns were raised by some delegations that the distinct identity of UNICEF might be lost in the process of harmonization. Some delegations, however, said that the loss of identity would be minimal. Given the importance of the subject of harmonization, and to have a better understanding of the exercise in connection with integrated budgets, a delegation requested that an inter-sessional meeting be organized by the secretariat.

107. Some delegations preferred that the secretariat keep to the original timetable set for the presentation of the initial proposals, which was the third regular session in September 1996. Due to the timing constraints, the Comptroller requested that the initial proposal be presented during the first regular session of 1997.

108. One delegation noted that the working papers provided by the secretariat were not provided in other working languages. The secretariat said that it would have to coordinate with UNDP/UNFPA on this issue as the same working papers were prepared with the other agencies and distributed in the same manner. (See chap. III, decision 1996/16, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

D. Progress report on the management excellence programme

109. The Executive Board had before it a progress report on MEP in UNICEF (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.6), which was introduced by the Executive Director.

110. Many delegations expressed their positive appraisal of the report on progress made to date and appreciation for the use of inter-sessional meetings as a means of keeping the Board informed and providing opportunities for the Board to provide guidance and direction. Two delegations noted their frustration with the limited opportunities open to Board members to participate fully in shaping the change process. One speaker requested that further steps be taken to define the relationship between the Board and the secretariat within the context of MEP.

111. On the issue of structure, a number of delegations endorsed the principles established by the Structure of Accountability Phase I project team, making special reference to the centrality of the country approach and more participatory management practices as being highly valued. A few speakers highlighted the need for dialogue on the relationships between country, regional and headquarters levels. One speaker expressed concern on the issue of control and oversight in a decentralized system. Several delegations expressed the need for the Board to fully debate the impact of proposals on structure prior to decision-making, including a review of the role of regional offices. One speaker stressed the importance of ensuring coordination with overall United Nations reform.

112. On emerging proposals for relations with National Committees, several speakers stressed the importance of consultation with the Board prior to decision-making. Questions were raised on the role of National Committees

regarding advocacy and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. One delegation stated that it would not support expenditures for such activities in industrialized countries. Further clarification was requested on the issue of regional management of National Committees. One speaker highlighted the need for closer relations between UNICEF and both National Committees and their Governments.

113. One delegation requested consultation with the Board on the outcome of the consultancy on supply operations. Another speaker said that he hoped recommendations on relations with the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations would go beyond the vague and unsatisfactory proposals that had emerged from the work of the project team. A few speakers praised the secretariat's efforts to create a multidisciplinary team on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and requested more information. One delegation requested more information on the merging of strategic planning, evaluation and social policy and economic analysis functions, and on how the new office would function.

114. Requests were made by many delegations for a timetable, in matrix form, listing when recommendations would be brought to the Board for discussion, identifying issues requiring Board approval and highlighting when key decisions would need to be taken.

115. Delegations also requested that opportunities be made for informal but substantive discussions before any MEP recommendations were presented to the Board. One speaker suggested that an open-ended working group be established to consider the issues and recommendations properly. Another speaker stressed the importance of the Board being well prepared in advance for discussions to take place on recommendations emerging from MEP, including the need for the distribution of background documentation prior to inter-sessional meetings to allow for more substantive discussions.

116. The secretariat agreed that the following topics would be discussed at the 29 May inter-sessional meeting of the Executive Board: (a) recommendations on relations with National Committees for UNICEF; (b) a progress report on the new PROMS; (c) emerging recommendations related to structure; and (d) recommendations from the external consultancy on information technology. A timetable for discussions of various proposals with the Board and a subsequent decision-making timeframe, as well as an update on linkages between Booz•Allen & Hamilton would be included in next MEP progress report, which will be submitted to the 1996 annual session.

E. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council/follow-up to the triennial policy review on operational activities for development

117. The Executive Board had before it the Executive Director's annual report to the Economic and Social Council (E/ICEF/1996/10 (Part II)), a combined report that dealt with both agenda items, which was introduced by the Executive Director.

118. Most delegations speaking on the annual report to the Economic and Social Council said that it was comprehensive and useful and represented an improvement over previous reports. However, many delegations said that in future, the report should be more analytical, substantive and problem-oriented and less descriptive, and provide specific recommendations for the Council. Some delegations said that the sections on humanitarian activities and collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions did provide this sort of information. Some delegations said that the report was too short, and others stated that it should have been prepared jointly with the other funds and programmes reporting to the Council. The Executive Director took note of the comments and that said they would be taken into account in the preparation of future reports.

119. Many delegations noted the importance of implementing General Assembly resolution 50/120 of 20 December 1995 and of enhanced inter-agency collaboration. Several delegations expressed concern about the fact only two UNICEF staff members were serving as resident coordinators and raised queries as to what UNICEF was providing to the resident coordinator system in material terms, what support was provided for country strategy notes and national capacity-building, national execution, field-level committees, coordinated monitoring and evaluation, and the programme approach. The Executive Director said that UNICEF was actively participating in the resident coordinator system and had undertaken actions to increase the numbers of UNICEF staff serving in this capacity.

120. Regarding coordination at the regional level, in particular among UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA, one delegation pointed out that while both UNICEF and UNFPA had a presence in the regions, the number and location of their offices and the countries they covered were not the same, and UNDP dealt with regions from its headquarters. The same delegation expressed the view that if UNICEF wished to promote coordination at the regional level, it should have a policy or strategy for each region, one adopted, after due consideration, by the Executive Board. The same delegation then asked how UNICEF intended to pursue coordination with other organizations such as UNDP and UNFPA in the future and whether the secretariat was of the view that it was unnecessary to reform the present structure of UNICEF regional offices. Those issues could not be discussed further.

121. Some delegations expressed concern over the proposed staffing reductions in the Office of Internal Audit, and a delegation asked about progress towards attaining equitable gender balance in UNICEF staff. The Executive Director assured delegations that the office enjoyed her full support, both in staffing and resources, and reiterated her commitment to adequate gender balance.

122. Most delegations commended the working relationship between UNICEF and the Bretton Woods institutions, particularly the World Bank, and urged that a strong relationship continue. Continued collaboration in the areas of policy, programmes and joint missions were referred to by several delegations. The absence of reference to the regional banks was noted. Some delegations, while supportive, cautioned UNICEF that this relationship must remain under the overall authority of the Government of the programme country. The secretariat agreed that the prime responsibility is with Governments, that the country programme should be used as the basis for programme activities and on the areas of difference in approach between UNICEF and the World Bank.

123. Many delegations commended UNICEF on the approach to humanitarian assistance, and it was stated that UNICEF should extend its coordinated training to Governments as well as the United Nations system. (See chap. III, decision 1996/8, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

F. 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

124. The Executive Board had before it a recommendation of the Executive Director (E/ICEF/1996/11). The Executive Director said that a total of 21 nominations were received from all parts of the world. After careful review at its meeting held on 8 April, the Bureau had endorsed the Executive Director's recommendation that the 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award be presented to the Centre régional pour le développement et la santé (CREDESA) (Regional Centre for Health and Development) of Benin.

125. Speakers praised the work of CREDESA, especially its key role in the launching of the Bamako Initiative in the late 1980s. Following the Board's decision to endorse the Executive Director's recommendation (see chap. III, decision 1996/9), the delegate of Benin expressed appreciation for the award,

which was in recognition of the work of CREDESA by the international community. The award, he continued, would help to publicize the activities of CREDESA on behalf of women, children and men.

C. Other matters

Recommendations to the Executive Board: extension of cooperation with Rotary International for polio eradication and extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative

126. The Director, Programme Division, introduced the recommendations which were contained in document E/ICEF/1996/P/L.62. These two programmes, he said, are among the great success stories of UNICEF, exemplifying how UNICEF can involve the participation of civil society and NGOs in development and promote self-reliance and sustainability in development programmes.

127. Since 1987, Rotary International has contributed over $115 million to UNICEF for the purchase of oral polio vaccine in support of the global effort to make the world polio free. This contribution has enabled UNICEF to provide over 1 billion doses of vaccines for children in over 65 countries. The impact of this long-term effect to control polio can be witnessed in the significant decline in reported cases of polio. The polio eradication programme has been a subject of continuing evaluation, assessment and monitoring by WHO, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other institutions in which UNICEF has been an active partner. As a result of the strong surveillance programme in this field, WHO and PAHO have been able to certify that the entire western hemisphere is now polio free and that there are many emerging polio-free zones in East Asia and in southern Africa. Rotary's partnership and support in this global effort have been of tremendous importance in making this achievement possible, and it has demonstrated the tremendous contribution that a private, volunteer organization can make to public health when mobilized. In the document, the Executive Director is recommending that the Board approve $60 million in supplementary funds which UNICEF expects to receive from Rotary International in the coming five years.

128. The Vaccine Independence Initiative was originally approved by Board in 1991 as a programme to assist countries to become increasingly self-sufficient in financing and procuring vaccines. The Board authorized the creation of a revolving fund, modelled after the PAHO Working Capital Fund for Vaccines, to enable countries to purchase vaccines through UNICEF using their own currencies and budgets. Since its inception, UNICEF has raised some $8.5 million to capitalize the Initiative. Many countries previously dependent on donors for vaccines have now assumed the costs for their own vaccine supply. Eight countries are currently purchasing vaccines with their own currencies through the Initiative, and numerous other countries are considering joining in 1996. UNICEF is seeking to continue to offer this service as a mechanism to assist countries in making the transition from donor-reliance to self-reliance. In the document, the Executive Director is recommending that this modest but successful programme of vaccine self-sufficiency be extended for another five years and that the Board approve $10 million in supplementary funding as indicated in document E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Corr.1 and E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.1/Corr.1.

129. All speakers expressed strong support for the two proposals. The polio eradication effort was viewed as an extraordinary partnership between the public and private sector which was paying off in real terms with very impressive results. Rotary International was commended for its critical role in these efforts, having raised over $250 million in support of the goal of eradicating polio.

130. Concerning the Vaccine Independence Initiative, one delegation said that the Initiative was playing a critical role in assisting host countries to establish sustainable means to finance and promote needed vaccines. He noted

with satisfaction that UNICEF had raised $8.5 million to capitalize the fund and that the list of donors had expanded. He expressed concern, however, that after four years, only eight countries were currently involved in the fund and asked the secretariat to comment on why more countries were not participating. In that light, he urged UNICEF to increase its promotion of the fund and to take the lead with other partners, using the inter-agency coordinating committees, to help countries develop sound strategical plans to achieve vaccine self-sufficiency.

131. While supporting both programme recommendations, one Board member expressed concern about their presentation, and he urged the secretariat to ensure that in future, all programme proposals submitted to the Board for extensions contain clear references to evaluations that have been undertaken during the previous programme period so that the Board has a basis on which to make an informed decision.

132. The Chairman of the Rotary International Programme for the Eradication of Polio then addressed the Board. He informed the meeting that in 1995, Rotary had awarded its most prestigious honour to world understanding and a prize of $100,000 for the humanitarian work of UNICEF in the name of the late Executive Director, James P. Grant, with whom they shared a dream of a world without polio. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak about the extraordinary cooperation between UNICEF and Rotary in the common goal of eradicating the polio virus. With 70-90 per cent of polio victims being children under three years of age, he said that eliminating the virus would not only save children from this crippling and sometimes fatal disease, but that mothers would be able to better fulfil their own lives, families would be able to function properly and Governments would be able to devote health dollars to other areas. It is estimated, he continued, that $1.5 billion would be saved annually by the eradication of polio. The number of reported cases of polio in the world has declined 85 per cent since 1988, and it is estimated that the figure for 1995 will be over 90 per cent. Rotary International is mobilizing immunization centres around the world and expects to have spent nearly $400 million, mostly on purchasing polio vaccines for needy countries, by the time eradication is certified. In fact, he said in closing, that Rotary had already committed $250 million of the $400 million and sought Board approval of the extension of UNICEF cooperation with Rotary in this effort. (See chap. III, decision 1996/17, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

Draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes

133. The Executive Board had before it the draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.10). The Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services took part in the discussion.

134. Delegations addressing this agenda item supported the general concept of enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes. They emphasized that the oversight mechanism was critical for funds and programmes and that a strong and effective oversight function was a key element of sound management culture, efficiency and accountability. They mentioned that there was no systemic way to assess the performance of oversight activities, emphasizing that internal and external oversight go hand in hand.

135. Some delegations emphasized that the adequacy of services are to be determined according to the specific needs of the funds and programmes for appropriate oversight mechanism. Therefore, it is necessary for UNICEF to identify the services available at the moment. They also emphasized that there should not be any "definitive split of responsibilities" and arrangements should be worked out according to expertise. They found that the working relationship and the division of labour between UNICEF and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) needed further clarification. They also mentioned that it was

necessary to find out the expected cost involved for oversight services to be incurred by UNICEF and by OIOS. Some delegations also suggested that OIOS should coordinate and report on the oversight activities of United Nations bodies to give a full picture of organization-wide activities.

136. Some delegations suggested that UNICEF should take maximum advantage of the existing expertise of OIOS, while other delegations mentioned that cooperation with OIOS should not downgrade the role of UNICEF in the matter. The support of OIOS should be requested only when internal resources had been exhausted. In this connection, some delegations stated that they were unclear as to the needs of UNICEF and requested information on the UNICEF position on the OIOS recommendations and how they would affect UNICEF. Several delegations found that the cost associated with the internal oversight mechanisms could not be determined from the draft report and questions arose as to how this would affect UNICEF.

137. Some delegations pointed out that consultation with the governing bodies of the funds and programmes should have been held first, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, before circulating the draft report of the Secretary-General. They also requested the Executive Director to present a report describing the present capacity of UNICEF in internal audit and oversight (the Executive Director advised that an oral report will be presented to the Board at its 1996 annual session in June).

138. A number of delegations strongly emphasized that the monitoring and evaluation function should continue to remain with UNICEF and that UNICEF should strengthen its monitoring mechanism to ensure accountability. The lack of adequate and clearly identified reporting procedures from the oversight units to the governing bodies was acknowledged. While some delegations proposed that OIOS should coordinate this reporting, other delegations saw this as the responsibility of the Executive Director. Some delegations saw the need for periodic comprehensive reports and ad hoc reports on specific issues to be prepared for the consideration of the governing bodies. It was put forward that recommendations 6, 7 and 8 of the draft report should be reviewed in the context of the role of the Executive Board. They felt that Executive Boards, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly should seriously undertake their oversight responsibilities.

139. Delegations felt that investigation capabilities were not well developed. There was no consensus on how this capability should be developed. Some delegations proposed that the operational funds and programmes should have there own investigation sections, while others saw this as the sole responsibility of OIOS. It was argued that OIOS should have prompt access to all records.

140. The Under-Secretary-General, OIOS, mentioned that OIOS would share experience with UNICEF through a meaningful dialogue and would not replace existing mechanisms. It could undertake investigations which were more relevant to UNICEF. OIOS would enhance the oversight mechanism of funds and programmes only in the areas where they did not have the capacity to perform. He added that the purview of OIOS has been spelt out in the relevant General Assembly resolution.

Progress report on the audit of the Kenya country office

141. The Executive Board had before it a progress report on the audit of the Kenya country office (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.4), which was introduced by Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Sham Poo, who also provided an additional oral report on progress since the drafting of the report.

142. Delegations found the report succinct but lacking in clarity in some areas. Progress to date vis-à-vis implementation of audit recommendations was therefore difficult to ascertain. It was also unclear what the future

consequences were for the Kenya country programme. It was requested that future reports should, in a table format, show the 67 audit recommendations as well as indicating current progress and constraints.

143. One delegation requested the status of fraud charges against staff members and queried if any staff member had been successfully prosecuted.

Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF

144. The President of the Board submitted a draft decision on the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the operations of UNICEF (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.15) for Board approval. The draft contained a recommendation to the General Assembly that it allocate a plenary meeting during its fifty-first session in 1996 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF. There was also a request to the Executive Director that she make all the necessary preparations for this commemoration. It was a procedural decision in order to allow the General Assembly to take action upon the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council.

145. One delegation felt that the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary by the General Assembly was part of a programme of commemorations, and before taking a decision, requested the secretariat to inform delegations about what was planned for the 1996 annual session and what was the context of the other celebrations. The President of the Board confirmed that the meeting of the General Assembly was part of a whole series of commemorations, including the one for UNICEF.

146. Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Lewis, gave the following overview of the various events planned during the remainder of 1996: (a) fiftieth anniversary commemoration of UNICEF at the annual session on 19 June; (b) mid-decade goals, as well as some event with the Secretary-General and possibly the initiating countries of the World Summit for Children, on 30 September; and (c) the release of The State of the World's Children 1997 and request for the General Assembly to set aside a meeting consistent with the decisions on UNFPA and UNDP in similar situation, on 11 December.

147. With regard to the commemoration at the annual session, which the secretariat hoped was consistent with the Board's wishes, Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Lewis, presented the following tentative programme for the afternoon of 19 June: (a) a distinguished speaker to address the importance of the 50 years of UNICEF; (b) a performance by the United Nations International School choir; (c) a performance by a very respected children's orchestra, drawn primarily from Asian countries; and (d) a reception in the delegates' dining room to cap the afternoon's activities. (See chap. III, decision 1996/18, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

Election of Executive Board representatives to the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy

148. In view of the expiry of Board membership of the Philippines, which had represented the Asian group on the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy, and in accordance with decision 1994/R.2/2 (E/ICEF/1994/13/Rev.1), the Executive Board elected one new member and one new alternate from the Asian group to the Joint Committee (see chap. III, decision 1996/19, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

Dates of Executive Board sessions

149. The President recalled to Board members that the original dates set for the 1996 annual session were from 3 to 7 June. However, because of the scheduling of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in Istanbul for the same period, the Bureau had suggested that the Executive Board meet from 17 to 21 June instead.

150. The President also was seeking Board approval of the proposed dates for 1997 Board sessions. An informal paper containing the proposed dates, which had been approved by the Bureau, had been circulated to Board members. (See chap. III, decision 1996/20, for the text of the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

Situation in Liberia

151. The Executive Director reported briefly on the situation of UNICEF staff in Liberia in the wake of renewed violence. The staff were trapped in the compound and were assisting some 300 people seeking asylum from the fighting. The compound was attacked, the office was entered and the staff were forced onto the roof. The staff were able to negotiate safe passage, and while many of the national staff went home, the international staff made it safely to the United States Embassy and were airlifted to Freetown, and then to Dakar. She had high praise for the officer-in-charge, Rosemary Fieth, who did an extraordinary job in getting the staff out safely. UNICEF was trying to assist national staff members there. She added that UNICEF was discussing preparations for a restaging operation and joining in the rapid international deployment.

H. Concluding remarks

152. In her closing statement, the Executive Director said that it had been a very productive meeting and thanked both individual delegations and the Board as a whole for their continuing commitment and strong leadership. She briefly reviewed some of the major accomplishments of the meeting. She assured delegations that nothing in the deliberations on the budget or management excellence should call into question the depth of the organization's unwavering and irreversible commitment to child survival and to its work in health generally. In fact, the purpose of the reorganization was to sustain and improve what was already being done in the field of health. The Board's full participation in the management excellence process was vitally important and she looked forward to discussing it during the upcoming inter-sessional meeting on 29 April. The secretariat also took very seriously comments on the need to maintain Africa as its top regional priority and to participate fully in the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. She thanked the Board again for its support and guidance.

153. The President of the Executive Board said that the main theme of the session had been one of dialogue, both between the secretariat and Board members and between the delegations themselves. The intense consultations on the integrated budget were an example of that ongoing dialogue and a step in the process of reform taking place through the United Nations system. The Board had adopted a number of important decisions, and in particular he noted the continued progress being made by the secretariat on MEP as well as the interest of Board members to be more engaged in the recommendations in the future. In that connection, he expressed appreciation for the willingness of the Executive Director to share with the Board a number of preliminary reports and recommendations at the informational meeting to be held on 29 May. The reports of the regional directors on recent events and, in particular, the Executive Director's report on the situation in Liberia reminded all Board members of the importance of the work done by UNICEF in the field. He said that as the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF is commemorated, delegations should remember the courage of the staff of UNICEF and of the United Nations who face real dangers in assisting children threatened by war. Recalling that there would be a formal ceremony of the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF at the annual session in June, the President hoped that all delegations would take an active part. In closing, the thanked the UNICEF secretariat staff as well as United Nations Conferences Services staff for their assistance during the session.

III. DECISIONS ADOPTED

1996/7. Proposals for UNICEF cooperation and programme reviews

The Executive Board

Approves the following recommendations of the Executive Director for programme cooperation as summarized in documents E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43, E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Corr.1, E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.1 and E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.1/Corr.1:

(a) $841,000 for general resources funding and $490,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Africa, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Zambia	1996	841 000		P/L.44
Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office	1996-1998		490 000	P/L.45

(b) $18,479,000 for general resources funding and $92,301,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in the Americas and the Caribbean, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Honduras	1996-2000	4 850 000	10 701 000	P/L.46
Mexico	1996-2001	6 280 000	40 400 000	P/L.47
Nicaragua	1996	119 000		P/L.48
Peru	1996-2000	5 380 000	40 000 000	P/L.49
Venezuela	1996-1997	1 850 000	1 200 000	P/L.50

(c) $117,470,000 for general resources funding and $234,138,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Asia, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Cambodia	1996-2000	11 550 000	61 700 000	P/L.51
India	1996-1997	71 600 000	137 400 000	P/L.52
Pakistan	1996-1998	34 320 000	35 038 000	P/L.53

(d) $16,900,000 for general resources funding and $54,150,000 for supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Albania	1996-2000	4 850 000	10 000 000	P/L.54
Bosnia and Herzegovina and area office	1996-1998	5 025 000	16 650 000	P/L.55
Croatia	1996-1998		8 400 000	P/L.56
Georgia	1996-2000	4 850 000	6 650 000	P/L.57
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1996-1998	2 175 000	4 050 000	P/L.58
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	1996-1998		8 400 000	P/L.59

(e) $156,000 for general resources for programme cooperation in the Middle East and North Africa, as follows:

Country	Period	General resources	Supplementary funds	Document E/ICEF/1996/
Lebanon	1996	156 000		P/L.60

Second regular session
9-10 April 1996

1996/8. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

The Executive Board

Takes note of the "Report of the Executive Director: Annual report to the Economic and Social Council" (E/ICEF/1996/10 (Part II)), and decides to transmit it to the Economic and Social Council, together with the comments made by delegations at the present session.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/9. 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award

The Executive Board

1. Decides to present the 1996 UNICEF Maurice Pate Award to the Centre régional pour le développement et la santé (Regional Centre for Health and Development) of Benin;

2. Approves an allocation of $25,000 from general resources for that purpose.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/10. Headquarters and regional offices budget for the biennium 1996-1997

The Executive Board

1. Welcomes the progress made towards greater transparency in the UNICEF budget and greater clarity in the budget document and requests the Executive Director to consider how further progress may be made;

2. Takes note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.7);

3. Resolves:

(a) That the headquarters and regional offices budget for the biennium 1996-1997 is approved as follows:

		(In thousands of United States dollars)
Part I	Programme assistance	5 707
Part II	Programme support	165 817
Part III	Management and administration	174 476
	Total expenditures	346 000

(b) That for the biennium 1996-1997, a commitment of $346.0 million for the budget is approved;

(c) That the Executive Director be authorized to administer in the most efficient manner the provisions under each of parts I, II and III. The Executive Director may be authorized, without further authorization of the Executive Board, to transfer, if necessary, into any one of parts I, II and III, an amount not exceeding 5 per cent from these same parts, or to transfer into part I any amounts from parts II or III. The amount in part II may be revised upward or downward in line with the recovery from packing and assembly activities (decision 1996/11). In exceptional circumstances, the Executive Board may be consulted by mail poll;

4. Strongly reaffirms the policy commitment of UNICEF to assist sustaining the implementation of the Bamako Initiative in the field and the necessity in this light to preserve, at all appropriate levels in the organization, professional assistance, with a requisite technical and managerial capacity to do so;

5. Requests the Executive Director, following the reports of the accountability and structural studies under the management excellence process, to submit a report to the Executive Board on proposals for a revised and rationalized organizational structure of UNICEF, including health sector;

6. Urges the Executive Director to do her utmost to absorb further revisions of the headquarters and regional offices budget during the biennium 1996-1997 within the established limit of $346.0 million and to inform the Executive Board at a very early stage about possible revisions. Revisions to be decided upon should be submitted to the Executive Board after review by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

7. Notes that the actual percentage decrease in resources allocated to the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Office is not reflected in the 1996-1997 integrated budget and requests the Executive Director to ensure that future

budget reports reflect the actual percentage changes in resources allocated to the regional offices;

8. Requests the Executive Director to continue consultations with the Executive Board about the integrated budgeting in UNICEF, in particular in the context of the elaboration of the integrated budget for field offices, and to take the results of these consultations into account when preparing the budget for the 1998-1999 biennium.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/11. Headquarters and regional offices budget for the biennium 1996-1997

The Executive Board

Resolves that, for the biennium 1996-1997, the recovery from packing and assembly activities is approved as follows:

	(In thousands of United States dollars)
Recovery from packing and assembly activities	18 000

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/12. General resources programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997

The Executive Board

Resolves that, in view of the integrated budget proposed for headquarters and regional offices, a budget of $29,540,000 from general resources is approved for allocation to field offices as follows:

	(In thousands of United States dollars)
Emergency Programme Fund	25 000
Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean	3 540
Higher-income countries	1 000
Total	29 540

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/13. Supplementary-funded programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997

The Executive Board

Resolves:

(a) That the following amounts be raised from supplementary funds for the biennium 1996-1997:

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	Headquarters	Region	Field	Total
Regional offices	NA	12 000	NA	12 000
Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean	NA	NA	7 000	7 000
Subtotal	NA	12 000	7 000	19 000
Programme Funds for the 1990s Goals				
Health	5 200	NA	36 800	42 000
Nutrition	800	NA	4 200	5 000
Water supply and sanitation	300	NA	1 700	2 000
Education	500	NA	4 500	5 000
Intersectoral	1 500	NA	7 200	8 700
Subtotal	8 300	NA	54 400	62 700
Total	8 300	12 000	61 400	81 700

(b) That for the biennium 1996-1997, a total recommendation of $81.7 million for supplementary funding is approved; if necessary, funds in excess of indicated amounts for specific programme areas and regions can be received provided that the total amount of funds received is within the approved limit.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/14. Additional allocation for the administrative and programme support budget for field offices

The Executive Board

Resolves:

(a) That an additional allocation of $715,900 is approved for additional offices in the region of Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States for the 1996-1997 biennium;

(b) That the secretariat is authorized to establish three liaison offices in Minsk (Belarus), in Moscow (Russian Federation) and in Kiev (Ukraine);

(c) That the additional allocation of $715,900 can be added to the approved 1996-1997 budget of $174.8 million for field offices (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, decision 1995/31).

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/15. UNICEF communication and information programme

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of paragraph 11 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.7);

2. Reaffirms the importance of public information and advocacy measures to promote increased awareness and better understanding of the activities of UNICEF;

3. Requests the Executive Director in this context to take into consideration the accessibility and the linguistic balances in the development of the electronic dissemination of information;

4. Encourages the Executive Director to present an information and publication policy, in the context of the mandate of UNICEF and the results of the Communications Project Team of the Management Excellence Programme, and in consultation with interested delegations, so that account will be taken of the need to prioritize its publications, with special attention to the risk of duplication with other publications of the United Nations and the financial and human constraints of the Fund;

5. Requests the Executive Director to submit to the Executive Board prior to examination of the biennial budget estimates for 1998-1999, the policy document referred to in paragraph 4 above;

6. Further requests the Executive Director to present in the document of the biennial budget estimates for 1998-1999 the detailed costs of publications and of their distribution.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/16. Harmonization of budget presentations

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the oral progress report provided by the secretariat on budget harmonization;

2. Takes into account the time constraints involved in the submission of the initial proposals for action to the Executive Board through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions scheduled for the third

regular session of 1996 in accordance with decision 1995/37 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1);

3. Requests the Executive Director to submit the initial proposals on harmonization for action by the Executive Board at its first regular session in January 1997, through the Advisory Committee;

4. Further requests the Executive Director to present an oral progress report, with working papers, to the Executive Board at the third regular session in September 1996. The report will include a comparison of budget presentations and of definitions of terms used by UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as well as an indication of steps that are needed for further harmonization;

5. Further requests that a joint progress report of the secretariats to the Economic and Social Council at its 1996 substantive session would include the progress made by the three agencies towards harmonization, taking into account the debates of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF during their second regular sessions of 1996.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/17. Extension of cooperation with Rotary International for polio eradication and extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative

The Executive Board

1. Approves a five-year extension of the programme of cooperation with the PolioPlus programme of Rotary International for the period 1996 to 2000, as described in document E/ICEF/1996/P/L.62, in accordance with the original Board document (E/ICEF/1990/P/L.35), and an increase of $60 million in the supplementary funding programme amount, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions from Rotary International;

2. Also approves a five-year extension of the Vaccine Independence Initiative for the period 1996 to 2000, as described in document E/ICEF/1996/P/L.62, and an amount of $10 million in supplementary funding, as described in the "round-up" paper (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Corr.1). This extension is in accordance with the terms of the original Board document (E/ICEF/1991/P/L.41), without any changes, so that it may continue to offer countries the possibility of procuring vaccines with their own currencies to meet global disease control goals.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/18. Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the operations of the United Nations Children's Fund

The Executive Board

1. Recommends to the General Assembly that it allocate a plenary meeting during its fifty-first session (1996) to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the operations of the United Nations Children's Fund;

2. Requests the Executive Director to make all the necessary preparations for this commemoration on the understanding that there are no financial implications.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/19. Election of Executive Board representatives to the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee On Health Policy

The Executive Board

Decides to elect to the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy for the remainder of the 1995-1996 biennium from the Asian group of States: Dr. Suyono Yahya, as member, and Dr. Nyoman Kumara Rai, as alternate, both from Indonesia.

Second regular session
12 April 1996

1996/20. Dates of Executive Board sessions

The Executive Board

1. Decides to change the dates of the 1996 annual session from 3-7 June to 17-21 June in view of the scheduling of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II);

2. Also decides to approve the following dates for its 1997 sessions: first regular session, 20-24 January; second regular session, 17-21 March; annual session, 2-6 June; and third regular session, 8-12 September.

Second regular session
12 April 1996